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REMARKS

In the Office Action dated October 3, 2003, the Examiner rejects claims 24 and 34-36 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. The Examiner indicates that claims 1, 5-9, 12-23 and 25-33 are allowed. With this Communication, no claims have been amended, added or canceled. After entry of this Communication, claims 1, 5-9 and 12-36 are pending in the Application. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejects claims 24 and 34-36 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. With respect to claim 1, the Examiner states that independent claim 24 includes the feature that the anode be integrated outside the discharge region, but the specification states that the anode is "at the edge of the gas discharge." Applicants' counsel wishes to thank Examiner Markham for his courtesies during a telephonic interview on December 23, 2003. In that interview, the undersigned explained that this feature of claim 24 finds support in Fig. 2 and the specification. In Figure 2, the gas supply 3 is shown outside the discharge region 2. The specification describes one embodiment of the present invention as being where the gas supply 3 is the anode. (See the first full paragraph on page 6). Thus, the specification supports the feature that an anode is integrated outside the discharge region. The Examiner agreed that this feature was supported by the specification.

It is respectfully submitted that this Communication traverses and overcomes all of the Examiner's objections and rejections to the application as originally filed. It is further submitted that this Communication has antecedent basis in the application as originally filed, including the specification, claims and drawings, and that this Communication does not add any new subject matter to the application. It is respectfully submitted that the application is in suitable condition for allowance; notice of which is requested.

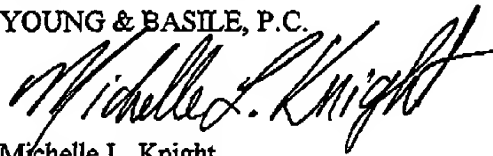
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If the Examiner feels that prosecution of the present application can be expedited by way of an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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